

United States Senate

July 24, 2015

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

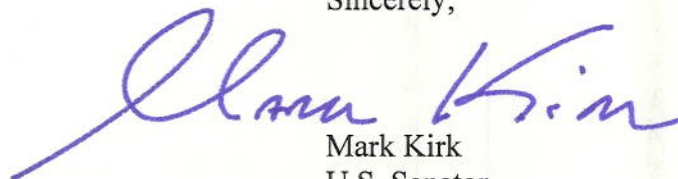
Dear Secretary Foxx:

I write in support of the 2015 Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant application submitted by the City of Springfield for the construction of the Usable Segment II, which would complete the second phase of the Springfield Rail Improvements Project.

The Springfield Rail Improvements Projects is a key component of the Chicago-St. Louis High Speed Rail Program, which when completed will allow for 110 mph passenger and freight rail service throughout the region. The Usable Segment II project would double-track a portion of the Chicago-St. Louis rail corridor to increase capacity along the rail line, while also improving the safety of downtown Springfield with the construction of grade separations at Ash and Laurel Streets. By constructing a bridge for rail traffic over the highway, the project is anticipated to reduce car and train accidents by 80 percent and vehicle delays at rail crossings by 71 percent. Taken together, these infrastructure improvements would boost regional connectivity, increase the safety of both trains and passengers, and improve the emergency access of area residents to the City of Springfield's Medical District.

The Usable Segment II project is a critical next step in making high-speed rail along the Chicago-St. Louis rail corridor a reality. The planned rail infrastructure investments will provide needed congestion relief and encourage future economic development opportunities in downtown Springfield. For these reasons, I urge you to give the City of Springfield's application every consideration. Please contact my Senior Advisor for Special Projects, Sarah Higgins, at 202-224-2854 if you need additional information about this project.

Sincerely,



Mark Kirk
U.S. Senator